Interagency Wildland Fire Records Project

Managing Incident Records in Support of Federal Fire Policy

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **Problem:**

  Loss of Fire Documentation Supporting:

    - **National Fire Policy**

    - **National Environmental Policy Act**

    - **Scientific and Historical Research**

Klamath National Forest, CA

**Before and After
Total Fire Exclusion**

1914

Same location, 1999

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **Issues:**
  - **Interagency teams fight major fires**
  - **Each agency had different schedule**
  - **Needed to identify and preserve permanently valuable incident records**
  - **Needed uniform disposition**

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **Our Approach:**
  - **Schedule records across agency lines**
  - **Analyze business and research needs**
  - **Identify records with enduring value**
  - **Analyze paper and electronic systems together**

Memorandum of Understanding December 2004

Targeted Assistance Project Wildland Fire Records

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **NARA Records Management Initiative:**
  - **Schedule records by function across agencies where possible**
  - **Simplify schedules: "Big Buckets"**

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **What We Found**
    - **No uniformity**
    - **Retention schedules not applied**
    - **Substandard storage**
    - **Records lost or destroyed**
    - **Disconnect between RM and Fire Mgmt.**
    - **Paper and digital a major issue**

Wildland Fire Records Project

Solutions:

**"Big Bucket" Schedule
   Approved January 2005:**

1. **Permanent Incident History File**

2. **All Others Temporary (7 Years)**

Photos and Images

News Releases/Reports

Fire Daily Progression Map

Fire Map – Final Perimeter

Final Statement of Costs

Final Fire Narrative

Final Fire Behavior Analyst Report

Wildland Fire Situation Analysis

Delegation of Authority

Incident History File

Incident Administrative File - 7 Year Retention

ICS 201 - Incident Briefings
ICS 202 - Objectives
ICS 203 - Organization
ICS 204 - Assignments
ICS 205 - Communications
ICS 206 - Medical Plan
ICS 209 - Incident Status Summary Report
ICS 211 - Check-In List
ICS 212 - Safety Inspection Checklist (& OPF 296)
ICS 213 - General Message Forms
ICS 214 - Unit Log

ICS 215 - Planning Worksheet
ICS 218 - Support/Trans Vehicle Inventory
ICS 219 - T-Cards
ICS 221 – Demobilization Checkout
Incident Action Plans
Air Operations/Helibase Records
Air Quality Monitoring Plans
Cost Apportmt. Agmt./Daily Cost Estimates
Cache Issue Return Report/Requisitions (OF 315)

Incident Administrative File - 7 Year Retention (continued)

Evacuation Plans
Fire Behavior Message/Weather
Forecast
Fire Complexity Analysis
Firing Operations Plans
Heritage/Cultural Res
Notification to IMT
Incident Communications Logs
Incident Critical Stress Mgmt.
Documentation
Incident Transition
Plan/Guidelines for Takeover
Incident
Extended Hours Justification

Mech. Equip. Use in
Wilderness Request
Photos, Non-Essential
Resource Advisor
Information
Resource Orders (originals)
Safety Officer
Reports/Accident Logs
Structure Protection Plans
"Thank You" Letters to
Public/Community
Training Specialist Narrative
Waybills
Weather Data (raw data files)

Paperwork Flow - Incident Fire Packages

Incident History File (Permanent)	→	Host Unit 3 Years	→	Records Center 17 years	→	Archives
Incident Admin. File (7 Years)	→	Host Unit 3 Years	→	Records Center 4 years	→	Destroy

Constraints - Litigation Holds, Special Research Needs (Home Units, Fire Labs, Others)
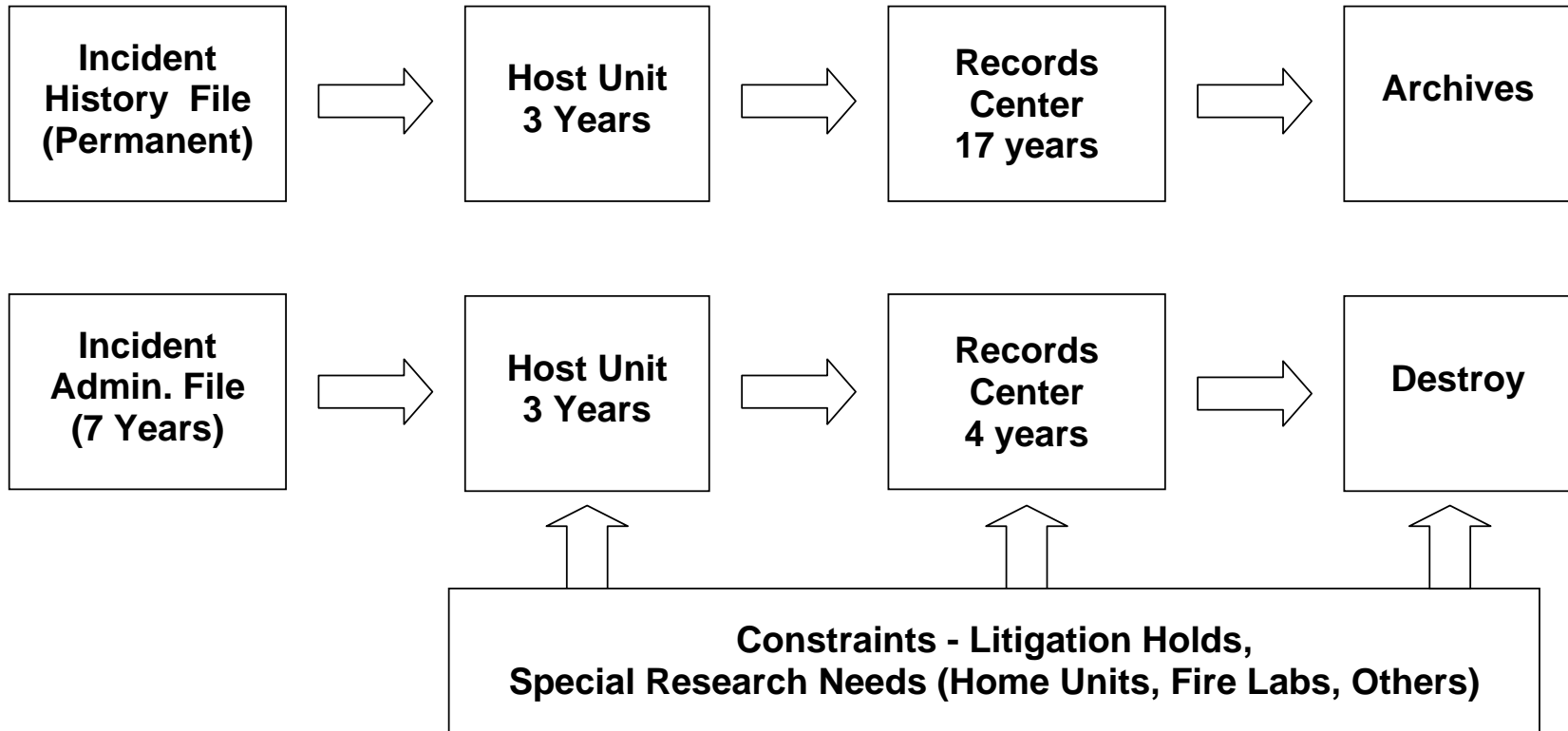
Wildland Fire Records Project

- **Electronic Records**

  – National Interagency Fire Management Integrated Database

  – Directory Structure for Incident Management Team Servers, CDs

  – Geographic Information Systems

Wildland Fire Records Project

- National Interagency Fire Management Integrated Database ("NIFF-MID")
  - Every significant wildland fire in US
  - Weather
  - Fuels
  - Fire Behavior
  - Predictive Tools

Wildland Fire Records Project

- National Interagency Fire Management Integrated Database ("NIFF-MID")
  - Relational database
  - 110 data tables
  - Software dependent
  - Not amenable to traditional NARA data archiving methods

Wildland Fire Records Project

- National Interagency Fire Management Integrated Database ("NIFF-MID")
  - Retention schedule that looks ahead to the Electronic Records Archives
  - Transfer format to comply with NARA requirements at the time of transfer

Wildland Fire Records Project

- Uniform Directory Structure for Incident Management Team Servers, CDs

  – Mirrors the organization of the Incident Management Team

  – Plugs in named documents in unit-based folders

  – Replicates a paper-based filing scheme also developed by the Project

Directory Structure Top Level

📁 **Incident Name, Team Name**
    📁 Reviews/Evaluations
    📁 Cost Containment
    📁 Images
    📁 IC
    📁 Information
    📁 Safety
    📁 Human Resources
    📁 Liaison
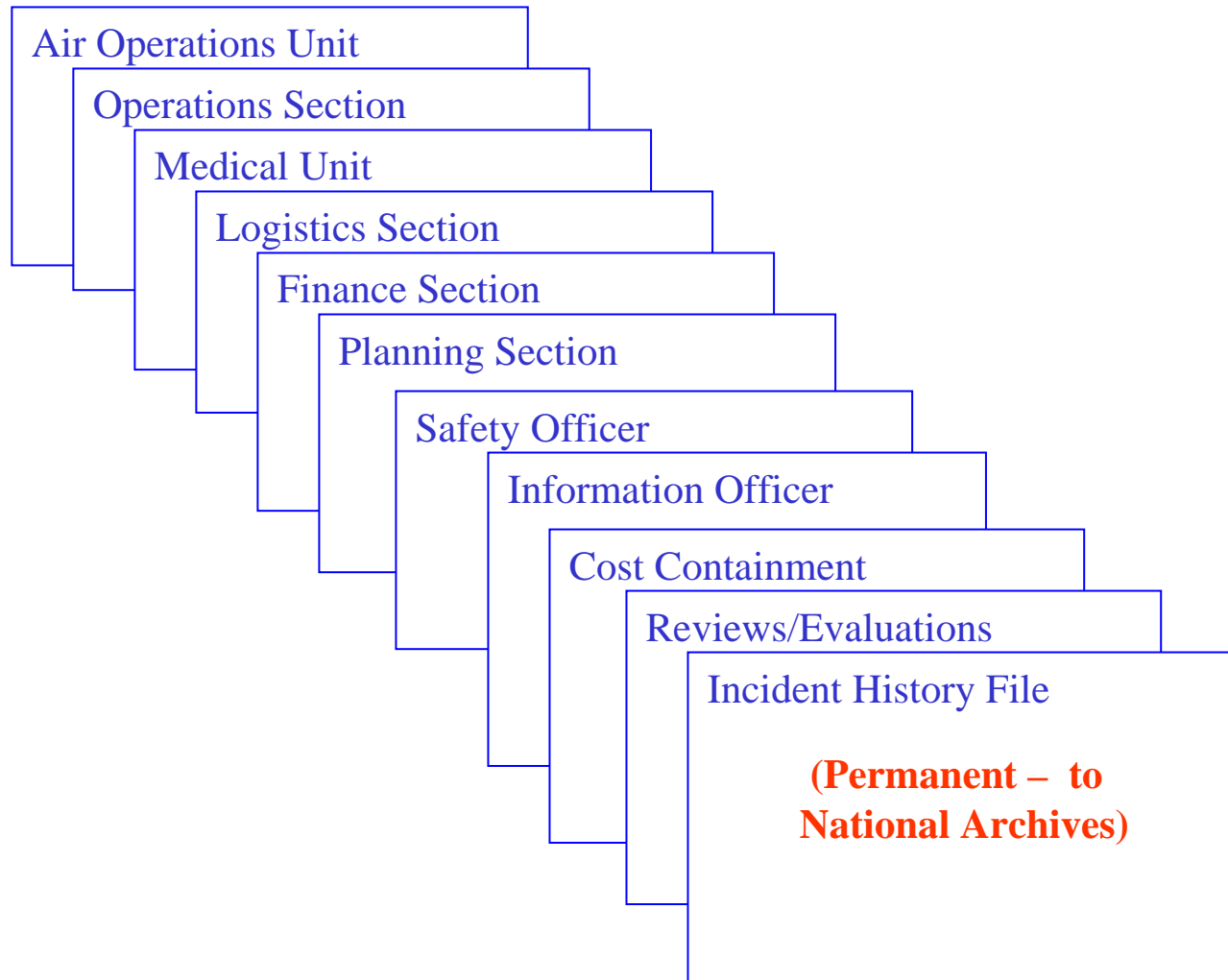   📁 Planning
    📁 Finance
    📁 Logistics
    📁 Medical
    📁 Operations
    📁 Air Operations

Paper Fire Records Packages
File Breaks in Order of Appearance in File Cabinets/Storage Boxes

Air Operations Unit

Operations Section

Medical Unit

Logistics Section

Finance Section

Planning Section

Safety Officer

Information Officer

Cost Containment

Reviews/Evaluations

Incident History File

(Permanent – to National Archives)

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **What About Geospatial Data?**

  - **It Must be Preserved**

  - **Big Problems**
    - Widely Dispersed
    - Lack Strategy

  - **Working with GIS Community**
    - Stop-Deletion Order
    - Inventory GIS Resources

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **Pilot Training:**
  - **Lecture/discussion plus hands-on processing of real fire records**
  - **Over 350 people in seven locations, interagency, interdisciplinary**
  - **Interactive version will go on-line**
  - **Curriculum to be integrated in existing training programs**

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **Legacy records must be preserved**
  - **Survey of units to assess problem**
  - **Most Forest Service units have reported**
  - **Agencies will set priorities**

Wildland Fire Records Project

- **Looking Forward**

  – **Evaluate Progress**

    - **Will Fire Organization/Resource Agencies Use These Tools?**

    - **Can Records Management Work Without Support Staff?**

  – **Apply Lessons to Other Program Areas**

Questions?
Comments?

Protect Your Legacy...

Organize and Preserve Your
Fire Records
Interagency Wildland Fire Records Project

For more information, contact your agency contact listed at http://www.nifc.gov

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